

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (amended) A discrete, preassembled, composite modular block for independent placement with other laterally and vertically adjacent blocks to form a wall structure of stacked block courses, the block comprising:

a. an outer wall and an inner wall, wherein at least one of ~~which is vertical load bearing and~~ said walls is made from a first masonry-type material and is vertical load bearing such that said wall can support loads superimposed on the wall structure in addition to loads imposed by higher block courses;

b. a connective structure formed of a second material different from the first material and connected between the outer wall and the inner wall, said connective structure comprising connective struts extending between and being connected to both the outer wall and the inner wall, such that the outer wall and the inner wall are securely positioned with respect to one another as opposite faces of a discrete rectangular block.

2. (previously presented) The block of claim 1 wherein each of the connective struts further comprises a wall connector at each of its ends to connect the connective strut to the outer wall and the inner wall, wherein the connective structure is free of direct, structural connection to the wall of any other adjacent block when the modular block is in a wall structure.

3. (original) The block of claim 2 wherein at least one wall connector comprises an elongated connector for insertion in an elongated groove in one of the outer wall and the inner wall.

4. (previously presented) The block of claim 3, wherein the elongated groove extends substantially vertically when the block is in a substantially horizontal course of blocks in a wall structure.

5. (original) The block of claim 2, wherein the wall connector is a compressible insert-type connector.

6. (original) The block of claim 5, wherein said insert-type connector further comprises a V-shaped structure with legs compressible toward each other for frictional engagement with a groove formed on an inside surface of the outer wall or the inner wall.

7. (original) The block of claim 6 wherein the V-shaped structure further comprises at least one rib-like formation integrally formed on the V-shaped structure to frictionally engage an adjacent wall upon insertion in a groove.

8. (original) The block of claim 6 wherein the V-shaped structure further comprises at least one compression-limiting projection on the interior of the V-shaped structure.

9. (original) The block of claim 2 wherein at least one connective strut has a wall connector in an elongated groove in each of the inner and outer walls and said connective strut is positioned substantially flush with the top of the outer wall and the inner wall.

10. (original) The block of claim 1 wherein at least one connective strut further comprises a first member and a second member with edges joined substantially at right angles to form an elongated strut.

11. (original) The block of claim 10 wherein the connective strut further comprises a third member, the third member joined with the first and second to form a strut with a channel-shaped cross-section.

12. (original) The block of claim 1, wherein at least one connective strut is formed from one or more of the group consisting of a plastic, a metal or a metal alloy.

13. (original) The block of claim 1 wherein the connective structure is comprised of one or more of the group consisting of ABS plastic, polypropylene, polyethylene, rigid polymers, fiberglass, or molded fiberglass.

14. (original) The block of claim 1 wherein the connective structure has low energy conductance.

15. (original) The block of claim 14 wherein the connective structure is comprised of one or more of ABS plastic, polypropylene, polyethylene, rigid polymers, fiberglass, or molded fiberglass.

16. (original) The block of claim 1 wherein at least one connective strut further comprises at least one recess for receiving a structural enhancement.

Claims 17-53 (canceled)

54. (previously presented) The block of claim 1, further comprising a partitioning panel component mounted on and cooperating with the connective structure and at preassembly placed in parallel spaced relation with the outer wall.

55. (amended) The block of claim 54 wherein the partitioning panel is placed closely adjacent the outer wall so as to define a weep gap between the panel and the outer wall, said weep gap extending substantially the full width of the outer wall.

56. (previously presented) The block of claim 54 wherein the partitioning panel is an insulating panel.